



Embassy of the United States of America
Office of Public Affairs
Baku, Azerbaijan

83, Azadlıq Prospekti
AZ1007 Bakı, Azərbaycan
Email: MirzoyevaSO@state.gov

Phone: +(99412) 498 03 35
Fax: +(99412) 498 93 12
URL: <http://baku.usembassy.gov/>

PRESS RELEASE

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The U.S. Embassy has learned of the verdicts in the trial of three Yeni Fikir youth group leaders. We note that a right to equal protection before the law, a presumption of innocence, and an impartial hearing are fundamental principles for all democratic societies. We are deeply concerned by indications that these rights, consistent with Azerbaijan's own laws and its international obligations, were not respected. We urge the Government to uphold the highest standards of criminal justice and human rights.